

the first Latinas to cross over into Anglo American mainstream media and appeared in television shows, radio broadcasts and major studio movies, Rosita performed for Pope John Paul II, Prince Charles and five U.S. Presidents including President Carter for his inauguration.

She introduced Mexican culture to a wider audience and was an ambassador for Latino cultures. First Lady Lady Bird Johnson named her "San Antonio's First Lady of Song," yet in San Antonio, she grew her as "Rosita" and were very proud that she represented our community.

She began singing at the age of 9 shortly after her family made their way from Monterrey, Mexico, to San Antonio. Rosita adapted to each new mode of entertainment. In the 1920's, she performed throughout south Texas with her uncles in the "Trio San Miguel." As radio grew more popular, Rosita began broadcasting on a W.O.A.I. program, As W.O.A.I. moved into television, so did Rosita as she appeared in the station's first broadcast. Thereafter, Rosita performed in a weekly series. Yet, she made recording the foundation of her career and cut hundreds of records over the duration of her career. Her recordings will perpetuate her brilliance and be a lasting contribution to American culture.

Rosita was a pioneer in popularizing a number of styles including canciones romanticas and the bolero, a hybrid style that fused African and Hispanic styles. At a time when the ranchera style was ascendent, Rosita breathed new life into canciones romanticas, which entailed complex orchestral arrangements.

Rosita achieved success on the silver screen. She appeared opposite John Wayne in "The Alamo," and played the lead in Disney's 1963 film, "Sancho, The Homing Steer," which was based on J. Frank Dobie's true story. But, at a time, when most Americans did not have first hand experience with Latinos, figures like Rosita or Desi Arnaz began to change perceptions and biases against our community. Rosita was the consummate cultural ambassador for San Antonio and Latinos throughout America.

Beginning in the 1950's, Rosita performed at the Arneson River Theater every year during the "Fiesta Noche del Rio." San Antonio could look forward to a summer full of their beloved Rosita performing at the beautiful amphitheater on the Riverwalk in La Villita. It was there during the 1968 Hemisfair that Rosita performed for 40 ambassadors. She became so inseparable from that place that San Antonio named an adjacent bridge for her and many said that this bridge symbolized the way Rosita brought Mexican and American cultures together.

She began a much deserved retirement in 1982 that concluded her performing career but began her philanthropic career. Rosita sang for numerous causes and charities and appeared at a wide range of locales to do so. Among the causes she supported were the Brooke Army Medical Center's Burn Unit, the March of Dimes, and churches. Yet, the cause she worked hardest to promote was that of education. After spending her life bridging cultures and educating America about Latinos, it is fitting that she chose to focus her talents on helping others cross the bridge from ignorance to knowledge.

San Antonio suffered a great loss and my thoughts and prayers go out to her husband and her family.

TRIBUTE TO PROJECT GRAD NEWARK

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues here in the House of Representatives to join me as I rise to acknowledge Project GRAD Newark as it hosts its sixth annual scholars celebration on Monday, June 19, 2006. Project GRAD has every right to be proud of its accomplishments and a celebration is indeed in order.

Project GRAD Newark was established in 1998 to provide support and an educationally enriched opportunity for Malcolm X Shabazz High School and eight schools that feed students to it. The objectives of Project GRAD Newark are to raise the level of academic performance in mathematics and literacy; to have students believe in their ability to achieve; to have all students aspire to graduate from high school and pursue a college education and to have students strive to receive the \$6,000 Project GRAD scholarship. Fortunately for the students of Newark, Project GRAD Newark expanded to include Central High School and its six feeder schools in 2000.

In both instances, the leadership of the Newark Public Schools assessed key indicators of progress and determined these two feeder groups were lowest in the district. These schools needed the GRAD reform initiative to support them with research-based programs, services and resources.

Project GRAD Newark is the first expansion site for the model that was developed in Houston, TX, in 1993. With initial support from Lucent Technologies Foundation and the Ford Foundation, the Newark Public Schools entered into partnership and launched Project GRAD Newark.

Today, 16 schools serving over 8,500 students, 485 teachers and 50 administrators constitute the Project GRAD Newark family. All can share in the joy of the improvements in each of the schools. On-time graduation rates at Central High School have doubled since it became a GRAD school. At Malcolm X Shabazz, the on-time graduation rate has improved by 20 percent compared to the years before it became a GRAD high school.

This year 109 students, 60 from Malcolm X Shabazz and 49 from Central, will graduate with the \$6,000 Project GRAD Newark Scholarship as they go off to college this fall. At a time when the City of Newark is struggling to reduce crime in the streets and help young people have hope and focus for a bright future, these students are taking full advantage of the opportunities Project GRAD Newark provides. Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in congratulating these students on their achievements and all those associated with the Project GRAD Newark program in helping to facilitate this significant program.

CONGRATULATING IMMANUEL ST. JOSEPH'S MAYO HEALTH SYSTEM HOSPITAL

HON. GIL GUTKNECHT

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Joseph's Mayo Health System Hospital of Mankato, Minnesota, on receiving the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Above and Beyond award.

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, ESGR, was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers. Their mission is to continuously gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve. Local and national representatives stand ready to help employers understand Federal laws that affect the call-up of their employees. The Above and Beyond Award recognizes those who have gone beyond what Federal law requires for supporting activated Guard employees.

Minnesota businesses that employ Guard members are an essential link in family support for deployed service members. The State of Minnesota is recognized as a leader among those employing Guard and Reserve members and received the 2004 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

Immanuel St. Joseph's Mayo Health System Hospital, ISJ-MHS Hospital, one of 475 companies nominated for the Above and Beyond Award, was nominated by Chief Master Sgt. Dennis of Mankato, Minnesota.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Immanuel St. Joseph's Mayo Health System Hospital for receiving the Above and Beyond Award from the National Committee for Employer Support of Guard and Reserve and commend them for the extraordinary services provided to those who serve our country.

KAREN HOSPITAL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, a few months ago, there was an historic moment that was, sadly, underreported by the news media in this county and in much of the rest of the world. It is only recently that I came to learn of it and I wish to bring it to the attention of this House.

On March 31, outside of Nairobi, Kenya, there was a dedication ceremony for the Karen Hospital, which is the first full-service hospital opened in Kenya since the colonial era, before that country became an independent state within the community of nations.

Karen Hospital is located in the Nairobi suburb of Karen, which many will recognize as the setting for the movie, "Out of Africa," which told the story of author Isak Dinesen, who used the pen name Karen Blixen, and who lived and worked in Kenya and wrote about that country and her love for it.